

take a forest full of paper to protect the environment. No telling how many trees we're going to keep up by cutting the paperwork burden of the EPA. But to cut the mission of the EPA to protect the environment and the future, no. Let's change in the right way, not the wrong way.

My fellow Americans, in the next 10 years as we move toward the 21st century, indeed, in the lives of all the children here present throughout their lives, I predict to you we will become more concerned with environmental issues, not less concerned. We will have to deal with the shortage of clean water, with global climate change, with the unfair environmental burdens that are placed on poor communities in America, with the political problems of uncontrollable immigration that are sparked all around the world in part because of environmental degradation. Do you remember how just a few months ago the waters were full of Haitian boat people trying to get to the United States because of political oppression? One reason is nobody can make a living down there because they have ripped every tree off every spot of ground in the whole country. It is an environmental crisis as well as an economic crisis.

So as we restore democracy, we know democracy will not prevail, we know that the Haitian people will not be able to live in Haiti and raise their children there and make money there and not seek to come to the United States or somewhere else unless we can rebuild the environment. My fellow Americans, we must be more concerned with these issues, not less concerned with these issues. We cannot disarm our ability to deal with them. Our natural security must be seen as part of our national security.

Take a last look at this beautiful bay behind me. I'll never forget the first time I saw the Chesapeake, about 30 years ago now—a little more actually. Will your children's children see what we see now and what I saw then? Will there be water clean enough to swim in? Will there be a strong economy that is sustained by a sound environment? Believe me, if we degrade our American environment, we will depress our economy and lower our incomes and shrink our opportunities, not increase them.

It is our landscape, our culture, and our values together that make us Americans. Stewardship of our land is a major part of the stewardship of the American dream since the dream grew out of this very soil. Robert Frost wrote, "The land was ours before we were the land." This continent is our home, and we must preserve it for our children, their children, and all generations beyond.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:46 a.m. in the Park at Concord Lighthouse. In his remarks, he referred to Governor Parris Glendening of Maryland; Mayor Gunther Hirsh of Havre de Grace; Charles Lee (Bob Lee) Geddes, management assistant, Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation; and Mary Rosso, founder, Maryland Waste Coalition.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters on the Oklahoma City Bombing

April 21, 1995

The President. Good afternoon. First let me say how very proud I am of the swift and decisive and determined work of law enforcement officials on this case throughout the country. I know every American is proud of them, too. Their continued vigilance makes me sure that we will solve this crime in its entirety and that justice will prevail.

Today I want to say a special word of thanks to the Justice Department, under the able leadership of the Attorney General, to Director Freeh and all the hundreds of people in the FBI who have worked on this case, to the men and women of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, to all the Federal authorities, and to all the State and local enforcement officials, especially those in Oklahoma who have been working on this case. And of course, I'd like to say a personal thanks, as I know all Americans would, to the Oklahoma lawman whose vigilance led to the initial arrest of the suspect.

As I said on Wednesday, justice for these killers will be certain, swift, and severe. We will find them. We will convict them. And we will seek the death penalty for them.

Finally, I know I speak for all Americans when once again I extend our deepest thanks

to the brave men and women who are still involved in the rescue teams. Let us not forget them. There is a lot of work for them still to do. It is difficult, and it is often heart-breaking now.

Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the people in Oklahoma City. And let me say again: You will overcome this moment of grief and horror. You will rebuild. And we will be there to work with you until the work is done.

Q. Mr. President, is there a sense now, sir, that this was not a foreign threat, that this was something from within our own borders?

The President. Let me say that I have never and the Justice Department has never said that it was a foreign threat. But the most important thing that you understand is that even though this is a positive development, this investigation has a lot of work still to be done in it, and therefore, it would be—it would be wrong to draw any conclusions. There have been lots of twists and turns in this investigation. But I would say to the American people, we should not assume, as I said yesterday, that we should not assume that any people from beyond our borders are involved in it. We should not assume anything, except what we know.

Q. Any idea about motive, Mr. President? Anything in terms of the one suspect who's been arrested—any feeling about what—where he was or who he was or what he was up to?

The President. I would defer, with the same comment that the Attorney General and Director Freeh had on that—we simply must not speculate on that at this time.

Q. Mr. President, will this prompt the United States—or the Government to take a new and a tougher look at the white supremacist groups, the hate groups, the militias? Is this going to trigger any kind of crack-down?

The President. Let me say that we need to finish this investigation now. We need to focus on this investigation. We need to finish this investigation. We need to finish the rescue. We then need to obviously examine anew, as we will over the next few days, the sufficiency of our efforts in the whole area of terrorism.

Maybe it would be helpful—let me just take a few moments to talk about what we have been doing for the last couple of years before the Oklahoma City incident, because I think it is apparent to any observant person that all civilized societies have to be on their guard against terrorism.

We have increased the counterterrorism budgets and resources of the FBI and the CIA. We arrested a major terrorist ring in New York before they could consummate their plans to blow up the U.N. and tunnels in New York City. We've retrieved terrorists who have fled abroad, as I said yesterday, from Pakistan, the Philippines, from Egypt, and elsewhere. We broke up a major terrorist ring before they could consummate their plans to blow up airplanes flying over the Pacific. We brought together all the various agencies of the Federal Government that would be involved in rescue and in response to a terrorist action and did a comprehensive practice earlier. And some of that work, I think, was seen in the very efficient way that they carried out their work at Oklahoma City.

And finally, let me say, there's been a lot of activity that the public does not see, most of which I should not comment on. But let me give you one example. There was one recent incident of which I was—or with which I was intimately familiar, which involved a quick and secret deployment of a major United States effort of FBI and FEMA and Public Health Service and Army personnel, because we had a tip of a possible terrorist incident, which, thank goodness, did not materialize. But we went to the place, and we were ready. We were ready to try to prevent it. And if it occurred, we were ready to respond.

So we have been on top of this from the beginning. Finally, let me say, I issued the Executive order, which gives us the ability to try to control funding more strictly. And I have sent counterterrorism legislation to the Hill, which I hope will be acted upon quickly when they return.

Rita [Rita Braver, CBS News].

Q. Mr. President, does the way this is coming down—does this way this is coming down give Americans any reason to feel a little bit more secure that this particular group is not

going to carry out something else, or do you just not know yet?

The President. I think Americans can be secure that our country has able law enforcement officials, that we work together well, that we have prevented terrorist activities from occurring, that, obviously, every civilized society is at risk of this sort of thing. I cannot, I must not comment on any of the specific people involved in this investigation at this time.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, CNN].

Q. Mr. President, is there anything that has come across your desk so far to suggest that this bombing in Oklahoma City could have been prevented, as other terrorist incidents that you were referring to were prevented? Was there a failure somewhere down the chain of command someplace that—a tip, a clue, a source, could have provided information leading to this explosion?

The President. I have no evidence to that effect at this time.

Gene [Gene Gibbons, Reuters].

Q. Mr. President, there has been a loud, constant drumbeat in this country in recent years: The Government is the enemy; the Government is bad. Given the way this case seems to be pointing, do you think that in any way contributed to what happened in Oklahoma City on Wednesday?

The President. I think it's important that we not speculate about the motives or the atmosphere or anything else until this investigation is complete. It can only—anything I say could only undermine the successful conclusion of this.

Q. Mr. President, you have been cautious about warning us and all Americans not to draw any conclusions over the past several days. Can you rule out a foreign tie to a domestic group, and can you in any way blame this incident on any kind of climate presently in this country?

The President. I cannot rule in or rule out anything. It would be inappropriate. The investigation has not been completed. And again, that's a variation of the question that was just asked. I cannot and I should not characterize this in terms of the climate or anything else at this time.

Let us do this investigation. Let the people get the work done. Let us follow every lead,

pursue every alley. Let's wrap this up so we can see it whole, and then there will be time for this kind of analysis. I understand why you want to do it. It's perfectly understandable and appropriate, but it's not ripe yet. We have to solve the heinous crime first.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:05 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement Announcing the Award of the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Gaylord Nelson

April 21, 1995

I am pleased to announce my intention to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to former Senator Gaylord Nelson, who as State Legislator, Governor, and Senator championed the protection of our natural resources. As we commemorate the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, his creation, it is fitting that we honor this great American's lifetime of public service.

In establishing Earth Day, Gaylord Nelson helped us to recognize that our fragile environment was increasingly at peril and that each of us could make a difference. His work has inspired all Americans to take responsibility for the planet's well-being and for our children's future.

I look forward to presenting the Medal to Senator Nelson.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
April 21, 1995.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Statement on Senator David Pryor's Decision Not To Seek Reelection

April 21, 1995

Throughout his career, David Pryor has been a champion of America's finest values. He is a fierce advocate for our children and the elderly and a ready voice for the cause of reason. From the State legislature and the